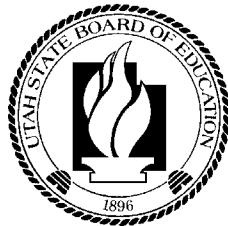


**The Report of the  
Accreditation Visiting Team**

**Olympus High School  
4055 South 2300 East  
City, Utah 84124-1831**

**October 14-15, 2003**



Utah State Office of Education  
250 East 500 South  
P.O. Box 144200  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4200

**THE REPORT OF THE  
VISITING TEAM REVIEWING**

**Olympus High School  
4055 South 2300 East  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84124-1831**

**October 14-15, 2003**

**UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

**Steven O. Laing, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

**DIVISION OF  
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL SUCCESS**

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**Salt Lake City, Utah**

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## **FOREWORD**

A major purpose of the accreditation process is to stimulate inservice growth and school improvement. Consequently, requirements include not only meeting the standards of the Utah State Office of Education, but also completing a school evaluation every six years.

School evaluation is that effort by the local school staff to take a comprehensive look at the school's program, operation, and effect. The school determines how closely its purposes and philosophy coincide with its actual practices and the degree to which its stated objectives are being reached. It is a three-phased program: (1) self-evaluation, (2) on-site evaluation by an external team of educators, and (3) implementation using units of the evaluation to improve the school by effecting thoughtful change.

The evaluation, October 14-15, 2003, was conducted because of the school's desire to ensure quality education for all students in the school, and to meet the requirements referred to above.

The entire staff of Olympus High School is commended for the time and effort devoted to studying and evaluating the various facets of the total program and to preparing the materials used by the Visiting Team. The excellent leadership given by Principal Paul Hanson is commended.

The staff and administration are congratulated for the generally fine program being provided for Olympus High School students, and also for the professional attitude of all members of the group, which made it possible for them to see areas of weakness and strength and to suggest procedures for bringing about improvements.

While these recommendations may be used to solicit financial support to acquire some of the materials, equipment, and services needed to carry out a more effective program, it is even more important that the faculty and administration utilize them as they continue to evaluate and modify course offerings and administrative and classroom procedures to more adequately meet the needs of the students of Olympus High School.

Steven O. Laing, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

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**Twila B. Affleck**  
Secretary

*\*Board of Regents Appointments*

*10/30/03*

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Paul Sagers .....	Assistant Superintendent, Program Services
Kevin D. Hague .....	Assistant Superintendent, School Services
Linda Mariotti .....	Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services
Dr. David Gourley .....	Assistant Superintendent, Support Services
David F. Garrett .....	Business Administrator/Treasurer

# OLYMPUS HIGH SCHOOL

## ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

### School Administration

Paul O. Hansen..... Principal  
Steve Hogan..... Assistant Principal  
John Shackelford..... Assistant Principal

### Counseling

Shelley Vroman ..... (A-D) Head Counselor  
Chad Croxford ..... (L – Ri) Counselor  
Belinda Ockey..... (Ro-Z)Counselor  
Kaye Poulton-Timm..... (E – K) Part-Time Counselor  
Linda Sullivan..... (E-K) Part-Time Counselor  
Ron Bailey ..... Career Center Counselor

### Support Staff

Lynda K. Horsley..... Principal's Secretary  
Naomi Gardner..... Secretary/Receptionist  
Rachael Morton..... Registrar  
Helen Lewis-Mellen..... Counseling Center Secretary  
Mardeen Stevens..... Career Center Secretary  
Kim Ogden..... Media Center Secretary

### Additional Staff

Aides  
Elizabeth Campbell  
Jennifer Goodman  
Natalie Yates  
Cafeteria  
Sharon Brewer  
Joyce Carr  
Judy Gardner  
Chris Garvey  
Peggy Hathaway

Nancy Johnson  
Susan May  
Kerrie Sine  
Janet Smith  
Terri Virgil  
Coaching  
Katie Markey  
Tony Wiseman  
Comm Ed  
Larry Rogers

Custodian  
Ron Bennett  
Todd Farnsworth  
Lowell Penrod  
Lynette Gorske  
Adam Sanderson  
Employment Specialist  
Allison Anderson  
Bobbi Plewe

Part-time Secretary  
Gloria McGrath

Kaye Maragakis  
Shawna L.  
Wangsgard

Say Officer  
Marcos Lopez

**Faculty**

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Jack Ashton  
Kaci Ashton  
Mike Bailey  
Matt Barnes  
Ray Barton  
Evan Bateman  
Darin Beirele  
Vicki Belnap  
John Bench  
Marci Bishop  
Richard Blatnick  
Pat Bullough  
Brent Burton  
Rebecca Brough  
Michelle Chapman  
Claudia Clayton  
Jan Creveling  
Preston Davis  
Tami Decora  
Juliette Durst

Joe Edman  
Robin Edwards  
Edna Ehleringer  
Jim Felt  
Giles Florence  
Laurie Giauque  
Brad Goffe  
Rachel Harris  
Cindy Hogan  
Richard (Chip) Hopkins  
Jon Hyatt  
Bob Johnson  
Ann Kartchner-Hauley  
Bob Kawa  
Kathleen Korkishko  
Mike Kushlan  
Marc Lyons  
Bill Manzanares  
Linda Mayne  
Monica McOmber  
Mike Miller

Shirley Montgomery  
Cheryl Moyle  
Geoffrey Murdock  
Edward Nielson  
Stacey Oppermann  
Kaye Poulton-Timm  
Mike Ptaschinski  
Carl J. Readicker  
Laurence Renzetti  
Denice Smith  
Pat Sodder  
Anni Stafford  
Stephen Stettler  
Diane Stokoe  
Renaë Syrett  
Darlene Twitchell  
Angie VanBerckelaer  
Jed Vanden Akker  
Dave Vande Veegaete  
Elizabeth Watson



# **OLYMPUS HIGH SCHOOL**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We are students, educators and parents of Olympus High School. We are dedicated to the principles of respect, responsibility, and life-long learning; to a safe environment that supports educational and personal excellence; and to the development of skills necessary for acquiring knowledge and using it wisely.

## **BELIEF STATEMENTS**

- All students become life-long learners by reading, writing, and thinking critically.
- All students can achieve the learning goals in the educational and occupational plan.
- All students will understand the importance of the values of respect, responsibility, trust, and caring with all people.
- All students can learn if they are provided with a variety of learning tools and opportunities.
- Clear goals and high expectations for student achievement should guide the development of the curriculum and the design of instructional strategies and learning activities.
- Teachers, staff, administrators, parents and community members will share in the responsibility for providing a supportive learning environment within our school.

## **MEMBERS OF THE VISITING TEAM**

Andrew Odoardi, Salt Lake City School District, Visiting Team Chairperson

Kohnie Jensen, West Jordan High School, Jordan School District

Rebecca Laney, West Jordan High School, Jordan School District

Tracy Moore, Hillcrest High School, Jordan School District

Deborah Sorenson, Murray High School, Murray School District

Deborah Swenson, Jordan High School, Jordan School District

## **VISITING TEAM REPORT**

### **OLYMPUS HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **CHAPTER 1: SCHOOL PROFILE**

Olympus High School is located in Holladay, Utah. The school opened in 1953. Current enrollment is about 1,500 students. Students come from middle- to upper-income families.

The accreditation process began two years ago. The principal has been at the school for six years, while both of the assistants are new to the school.

The school has a relatively stable population. The significant majority of the students speak only English in their homes.

The school has two active parent groups involved with the school. They are deeply involved in the school improvement processes and provide significant support to the school and the faculty.

The school's profile incorporates standardized test data from the SAT and Utah Core Assessments, and includes student ethnicity data, compensatory assistance data, and local demographic information. Additionally, a parent and student opinion survey also served as a basis for the self-study.

a) *What significant findings were revealed by the school's analysis of its profile?*

Analysis of the data reveals incremental improvement in student performance on the State Core Assessments. Disaggregation of the data based on gender and ethnicity would assist the school in identifying specific student populations that may be in need of additional support. From discussions with administration and school leadership, it was evident the staff has initiated the process of collecting student data and using this data to make decisions regarding school improvement goals, staff development needs, and allocation of resources. The staff also examined GPA data in considering appropriate school improvement goals.

Olympus High School conducted a perception survey of both parents and students. The survey was designed by a focus group consisting of students, parents, and staff. The staff made a concerted effort to gather data from a representative number of students and parents. The Visiting Team feels that the survey sample sizes were not adequate. Analysis of the results reveals that the majority of students and parents who were surveyed feel the staff, counselors, and

administrators are doing a good job keeping them informed and providing a high quality educational program

- b) *What modifications to the school profile should the school consider for the future?*

Olympus High School should continue its efforts to systematically collect and analyze pertinent student data to guide decisions made by the school. It is suggested the school collaborate with the district in designing an effective management system that can be utilized by different stakeholders within the school community. This effort should extend to disaggregating both state and national norm-referenced test data by content cluster, gender, grade level, and ethnicity.

Many of the school's strengths, as discovered by the Visiting Team, were not clearly identified in the report. For example, many of the teachers used a variety of effective instructional practices, and these were not mentioned in the report. Additionally, the staff's high level of collegiality, passion for students, willingness to engage in professional development opportunities, student recognition programs, and innovative use of time to collaborate are just a few of the school's strengths that were not highlighted in the self-study.

The staff recognizes its strengths as effective educators, and yet most of the staff is willing to endorse the concept of continuous improvement on behalf of the students. As the school becomes increasingly knowledgeable about using the self-study process to accurately identify student achievement gaps, reflect on current educational practices, and examine organizational practice, it will become more effective at identifying both its strengths and limitations.

#### **Suggested Areas for Further Inquiry:**

- The analysis of course grades, attendance, and discipline patterns should be incorporated in the school's comprehensive profile in the future.
- The staff should consider reexamining the school survey data and comparing satisfaction levels of students and parents by department. This comparison would allow each department to set performance goals/standards for the department and work collaboratively to achieve these goals.

## **CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS**

- a) *To what extent has the school community engaged in a collaborative self-study process on behalf of students?*

According to the report and Visiting Team meetings with parents, students, and teachers, all the teachers and administrators were involved in the self-study to some degree. Focus groups were identified, as well as sub-committees for the purposes of organizing, conducting, and developing the self-study. The focus group leaders provided direction and guidance for the process. Each group had interdepartmental representation as well as parents and students. In addition, each department met to identify how it linked its efforts to the desired results for student learning and to cite areas of strength and weaknesses. A series of regular meetings were held with parents and students for input into the development of the desired results for student learning.

*b) To what extent does the school's self-study accurately reflect the school's current strengths and limitations?*

The work done in the departments reflects a significant effort to identify areas of strength and limitations. However, the individual departmental analyses have not been integrated into a broader schoolwide set of strengths and limitations tied to the desired results for student learning, nor have they found expression in the action plans.

Secondly, while the departments made some effort to link their work to the desired results for student learning, they did not address how they assessed the degree of student accomplishment relative to the desired learner outcomes (indicators and standards), but instead tied weaknesses to factors which are organizational not instructional.

The Visiting Team recognizes that the school and leadership team made a sincere effort to do a thorough analysis of the school's strengths and limitations and commends them for this effort.

In the interviews with teachers, parents and students, it was clear that there was some uncertainty about how the desired results for student learning (DRSLs) and action plans will drive the work of the school over the next several years. There is work to be done on the part of the leadership team to ensure that the community stakeholders more clearly understand the nature of the DRSLs as tied to "what the students should know and be able to do," rather than to organizational, climate, and content-specific issues. Then the school will more fully appreciate the opportunities in the self-study process to identify student achievement gaps and address schoolwide achievement goals for all students.

### CHAPTER 3: INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Olympus High School's desired results for student learning (DRSLs) are as follows:

1. Character Development
2. Communication and Collaboration
3. Continuous Learning

#### **Shared Vision, Beliefs, Mission, and Goals:**

- a) *To what extent did the school facilitate a collaborative process to build a shared vision for the school (mission) that defines a compelling purpose and direction for the school?*

Olympus High School used a broad range of approaches in developing its mission statement, beliefs, and statement of desired results for student learning. The school leadership team began this process in 2001. A consensus-building process was put in place involving members of the faculty, focus groups, department chairpersons, parents, students, and administrators. The late start days provided the time to gain feedback and made possible the availability of teachers and parents. The process included review, revisions, and the production of the final draft after some feedback was received from the stakeholders. The final statement of the school's beliefs, mission, and desired results for student learning were distributed to teachers and parents. The mission statement and desired results for student learning are posted in every classroom. The desired results for student learning were also stated in all of the teacher disclosure statements that went to students and parents at the beginning of the current school year (2003-04).

- b) *To what extent has the school defined a set of beliefs that reflect the commitment of the administration and staff to support student achievement and success?*

The belief statements clearly reflect the commitment of the school to support student achievement and success. The reiteration of and attention to the belief statements are commendable. The commitment to the desired results for student learning offers a clearly defined focus on the quality of the school's culture and ideals in support of student learning.

- c) *To what extent do the school's mission and beliefs align to support the school's desired results for student learning (DRSLs)?*

The desired results for student learning (DRSLs) were identified through a process that involved parent/student surveys as well as the analysis of standardized test results. The Visiting Team applauds the efforts of the school

leadership team in targeting character education and writing as foundations for student achievement. The Visiting Team recommends that staff and stakeholders revisit the DRSLs in order to increase levels of commitment among the staff and define measurable goals and assessment strategies to monitor student achievement of the DRSLs.

Throughout the narrative of the departmental analysis and the narrative of the focus groups, there is clear evidence of attention to the issue of alignment of curriculum, instruction, and the DRSLs with the mission and belief statements and the action plans.

### **Curriculum Development:**

- a) *To what extent does the staff work collaboratively to ensure the curriculum is based on clearly defined standards and the Utah Core Curriculum (with inclusion of the Utah Life Skills)?*

The faculty is familiar with the Utah Core Curriculum. Some collaboration between departments has taken place to integrate Core concepts. The Visiting Team feels that a more definitive reference to the Utah Life Skills curriculum might have enhanced the development of the DRSLs by providing the indicators of student performance.

Articulation has begun around what is most essential in the Core Curriculum. There is a strong desire among some staff members to collaborate around integrated curricula and instructional strategies. The Visiting Team suggests that the staff continue to find time and methods for integrating core concepts across content areas and grade levels.

There is a clear sense of the alignment that currently exists, both with the Core and with DRSLs as reported in the departmental analyses. The faculty should continue this process by coordinating key concepts between and among departments.

- b) *To what extent does the teaching staff work collaboratively to support the development of a curriculum that focuses on the school's desired results for student learning?*

Formal and informal steps have been taken to promote a collaborative culture at Olympus High School. Although it is evident that schoolwide conversations have taken place around the accreditation process, the desired results for student learning are not clearly tied to these discussions. Increasing schoolwide understanding of criteria for selecting the DRSLs will enable the school community to have a clear focus around curriculum and instruction. The DRSLs are broad enough to encompass and reinforce effective practices already occurring

in the specific content areas. The beginning stages of schoolwide focus (i.e., writing across content) are emerging and need to be formalized into a schoolwide plan and assessments. Clarifying and refining specific action steps connected to the DRSLs will help drive this plan.

A corresponding effort should take place within each department.

### **Quality Instructional Design:**

- a) *To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students?*

A variety of learning strategies were observed, including lecture, group discussion, student presentation, simulations, personal coaching, and several other strong teaching methods. Learning experiences were suited to the content area and the specific lesson.

Random students were interviewed by each of the Visiting Team members. They reported that as they go through the school day they experience a variety of teaching strategies. The Visiting Team has observed the faculty to be dedicated, hardworking, and committed to students' success. Designing alternative ways of assessing student work, especially as it relates to the DRSLs, will enhance student engagement and achievement.

With the adoption of the DRSLs, the course curricula will require modification to increase the number of learning experiences that incorporate the DRSLs into the curriculum. Conversations have started between departments regarding curriculum integration, reading, and writing across the curriculum; the Visiting Team recommends that discussions continue. The departments have recognized the need to incorporate reading and writing strategies across the curriculum.

- b) *To what extent does the professional staff employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure the needs of different learners are met?*

The faculty has given serious attention to the need to recognize and meet the range of student learning styles that are encountered in every classroom. The Visiting Team suggests that the faculty collectively research and expand the use of multiple teaching strategies and instructional delivery options to meet the variety of needs of all students through the use of differentiated instruction.

- c) *To what extent do the professional staff and leadership provide additional opportunities which support student learning?*

There are a variety of programs, in areas such as athletics and the arts, to support student learning in addition to the regular classroom academics. More than a



dozen separate sports provide opportunities for athletes. A large music program (both vocal and instrumental), a drama program, a dance program, and a visual arts program provide exceptional training for students. A media center with extensive print and electronic texts is available for student learning during before and after school hours, as well as during school hours. An extensive Applied Technology Education program provides career preparation and work-based internships in a variety of vocations.

### **Quality Assessment Systems:**

- a) *To what extent has the staff developed classroom or schoolwide assessments based on clearly articulated expectations for student achievement?*

The Visiting Team's discussions with individual teachers and students lead to the belief that many of the teachers carefully articulate their expectations to students in their own classrooms. Documentation shows that students are performing admirably on national and state tests. However, schoolwide expectations and assessments related to the desired results for student learning had not been articulated at the time of the accreditation site visit. Schoolwide expectations based on the desired results for student learning ought to be measurable. Attention to methods of assessment linked to indicators and standards should shape the action plan.

- b) *To what extent are assessments of student learning developed using methods that reflect the intended purpose and performance standards?*

These assessments have yet to be fully developed and implemented on a schoolwide basis. The departments indicate a sincere effort to cite how they address the desired results for student learning, but have yet to develop ways to assess how students meet the indicators and standards for each desired result for student learning.

- c) *To what extent are assessments designed, developed, and used in a fair and equitable manner?*

Again, assessments in individual classes appear to be relevant and fair in terms of classroom material. The Visiting Team's concern is not for the outstanding job being done by individual teachers, but for the assessment of the DRSLs. These evaluations should reflect the efforts made by teachers to incorporate the schoolwide DRSLs into their curricula—so that it becomes not only a part of the classroom routine, but second nature to teach them in conjunction with the state core curriculum. The Visiting Team's discussions with individual teachers reveal that knowledge of the DRSLs, as well as commitment to them, varies from teacher to teacher. Some are already molding them into daily instruction; some are unsure how to make them part of the daily curriculum; some need to take the

time to educate themselves about the DRSLs. As the teachers become comfortable with the DRSLs in their daily curricular routine, well-designed assessments can be added to show student learning. This information can then be studied as part of the ongoing school improvement plan.

### **Leadership for School Improvement:**

- a) *To what extent does the school leadership promote quality instruction by fostering an academic learning climate and actively supporting teaching and learning?*

The school has established a strong and positive learning environment in which teaching and learning are actively supported. There is a culture of high expectations for students and staff. The school maintains a constant and steady focus on student learning. The depth of the school's commitment to improving student learning is clearly evident. Student and staff accomplishments are recognized.

- b) *To what extent does the school leadership employ effective decision making that is data-driven, research-based, and collaborative?*

Most decisions are aligned with the school's beliefs, mission, and goals. According to interviews with teachers, students, and parents, they feel that they had a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the direction of the school. The school's decisions relating to instructional goals have been made according to data from the school surveys and focus group discussions. However, there is a lack of sufficient data regarding student achievement that limits the school's ability to triangulate data from the variety of assessments in its decision-making processes. It is recommended that the leadership continue to extend and refine its data collection efforts as the basis for subsequent action steps.

- c) *To what extent does the school leadership monitor progress in student achievement and instructional effectiveness through a comprehensive assessment system and continuous reflection?*

The school's monitoring of student progress in achieving the essential knowledge and skills for their learning will be a great challenge for Olympus. In the next few years, leadership will be required to regularly assess the effectiveness of instructional practices. It is recommended that the school develop a comprehensive assessment system using researched-based data to inform subsequent instruction and instructional effectiveness.

- d) *To what extent does the school leadership provide skillful stewardship by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources of the school for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment?*

The leadership of Olympus High School provides skillful stewardship of the school.

Most of the schoolwide policies and operational procedures are consistent with the school's beliefs and mission, and are designed to maximize opportunities for successful learning. The allocation and use of resources are aligned with school goals. Parents, students, and staff have responded positively to the quality of school climate and culture that has been provided by the school leadership.

- e) *To what extent does the school leadership make decisions related to the allocation and use of resources which align with the school goals, the achievement of the DRSs, and school improvement efforts?*

The Visiting Team was impressed by the alignment of resources with the school improvement efforts. The school leadership has fostered a learning community of adults that emulates the efforts to establish a learning environment for students in the classroom.

- f) *To what extent does the school leadership empower the school community and encourage commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning?*

The school actively engages parents and families as partners in the learning process through a variety of programs, resources, and instructional materials. The school builds collaborative networks of support with community members. The administration is encouraged to continue building the knowledge, skills, and expertise of the faculty to employ data-driven and research-based decision-making that will serve to enhance school improvement planning over the long term.

### **Community Building:**

- a) *To what extent does the school foster community building and working relationships within the school?*

The Visiting Team was impressed with the feeling of shared enthusiasm felt among the faculty, students, and parents. Olympus High School has a long history of excellence, which was clearly evident during the visit. Student volunteers from various clubs and student government groups were abundant and helpful, and random visits with students, faculty, support staff, and administrators strongly reflected positive and productive working relationships.

- b) *To what extent does the school extend the school community through collaborative networks that support student learning?*

All parents and families are expected to participate in the school experience through SEOPs, parent-teacher conferences, and a parent newsletter. In addition, parents are invited to involve themselves with the school through school committees and a strong PTSA, and many do so. The Visiting Team encourages the school to continue its efforts to foster active community involvement in the school.

Efforts are made in some classes to establish collaborative networks with related community organizations providing, for example, classroom simulations and shadowing and internship experiences coordinated with classroom learning.

### **Culture of Continuous Improvement and Learning:**

- a) *To what extent does the school build skills and the capacity for improvement through comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs focused on the school's goals for improvement?*

The faculty of Olympus High School has a clear commitment to ongoing professional development. The late start days and portions of faculty meetings are dedicated to professional development activities. Much of the discussion in the department meetings is devoted to sharing ideas about curriculum and instruction. The administration supports these efforts through the allocation of time and resources.

- b) *To what extent does the school create conditions that support productive change and continuous improvement?*

The administration works to maintain a culture of continuous improvement. Parents, teachers, and support staff feel that the administration is receptive to new ideas. The Visiting Team recommends that the support and resources allocated toward the implementation of school goals and the action plans be continuously analyzed for effectiveness and impact.

## **CHAPTER 4: NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION OF ACCREDITED SCHOOLS (NAAS) STANDARDS I-XI**

All of the standards are met and elaborated in the annual report.

### **Standard I – Educational Program**

This standard is met.

**Standard II – Student Personnel Services**

This standard is met.

**Standard III – School Plant and Equipment**

This standard is met.

**Standard IV – Library Media Program**

This standard is met.

**Standard V – Records**

This standard is met.

**Standard VI – School Improvement (This is addressed in the self-study.)**

This standard is met.

**Standard VII – Preparation of Personnel**

This standard is not met. The school has five teachers without licenses, and four who are “not qualified” for assignments. There were no letters of authorization as of the date of the visit (October 15, 2003).

**Standard VIII – Administration**

This standard is met.

**Standard IX – Teacher Load**

This standard is met.

**Standard X – Activities**

This standard is met.

**Standard XI – Business Practices**

This standard is met.

## CHAPTER 5: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS – ACTION PLAN

- a) *To what extent is the schoolwide action plan adequate in addressing the critical areas for follow-up?*

The action plan currently addresses several major concerns identified by the staff and reflected in the profile data. They effectively address critical areas for improvement. The entire staff is encouraged to focus its efforts on those areas articulated in the action plans that will have a direct impact on student learning and student achievement. The strength of the self-study was in the departmental analysis of the extent to which each one addressed the desired results for student learning.

- b) *To what extent is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and systemwide?*

It was evident to the Visiting Team that the leadership team and administration, as well as many members of the teaching staff, share a strong commitment to the action plans. However, it was apparent that some of the faculty members were not fully committed to addressing the school's DRSLs and recognizing the impact that implementing the DRSLs will have on classroom instruction and assessment. The administration and leadership team will need to secure the commitment of the staff before as they proceed to implement some portions of the action plans and Visiting Team recommendations.

- c) *How sound does the follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishments of the schoolwide action plan appear to be?*

In order to monitor school improvement efforts and evaluate their effectiveness, the school leadership still needs to identify what data/evidence should be collected and periodically/incrementally analyzed by the team. The Visiting Team suggests incremental benchmarks and analyses of how the data from the findings affected instructional strategies, instructional delivery, and curriculum content.

## CHAPTER 6: MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISITING TEAM

### **Commendations:**

- The parents, faculty, and administration are to be commended for their conscientious and diligent efforts to create a positive culture and climate supportive of good teaching and learning.

- The faculty and administration are to be commended for their ongoing efforts in working to identify the needs of students and parents, and in creating a positive community image for Olympus High School. The community perception of the school as a safe learning environment, with the staff holding high expectations for student learning and caring teachers and administration willing to do whatever is necessary to help students succeed, is validated in the surveys and by the experience of the Visiting Team.
- The administration and staff are to be commended on a sincere effort to conduct a meaningful self-study of their school and to use the process as a foundation for continuous school improvement measures.

### **Recommendations:**

The Visiting Team is in substantial agreement with the myriad of recommendations that come out of the departmental and focus group analyses and the goals of the action plans. They are indicative of the high quality of the self-study effort and the integrity of the processes in working to develop the school improvement plans. The Visiting Team's hope is to narrow the focus for the school's improvement processes and link them to attainable results by virtue of the following recommendations.

- The school should continue to develop its self-study document by (1) collecting additional data, disaggregating and analyzing student data, and (2) aligning the action plans to address the findings resulting from the profile and departmental analyses of how well students are meeting the desired results for student learning.
- The school needs to engage the whole staff in collaborative inquiry with regard to the school's desired results for student learning. This would include:
  - Increasing schoolwide understanding of the purposes and criteria used for determining and selecting the desired results for student learning.
  - Collectively studying best practices and research in the teaching and assessing of the school's desired results for student learning.
  - Developing a means of evaluating student work to determine whether or not Olympus High students are becoming better communicators and thinkers as a result of their learning experiences as teachers implement the standard evaluation rubric to improve student writing.
  - Continuing to utilize the opportunities provided by the late start days for teachers to collaborate for the purposes of professional development, sharing best practices, and implementing the school's action plan.